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HENRY WARD BEECHER.



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WORKING AND WAITING.

“And having done all, to stand.”—EPH. vi., 13.

This is part of that remarkable figure, drawn from ancient warfare, by which the apostle sets forth a Christian man as a warrior; describes the various moral influences under which he acts, as parts of his armor offensive and defensive; and represents him as having made every preparation, not only, but also as having adventured into the battle, and come to a point in which nothing more was to be done, and yet he was to stand.

There are many times, in the course of a great battle, when to hold a point is itself victory. They that hold it may not be able to advance; they may not be able mightily to repulse the adversary; but, by the sacrifice of life, by persistent courage, by indomitable obstinacy, they hold on; while other events transpire around the battle-field, and, at last, the active fighters, sweeping round in circles of fire, bring victory. But, after all, it hinged on the courage of the men who held that place. Others seem to have reaped the victory; but the general knows that it was due to those who held the key of the battle-field.

The Apostle Paul, without thinking of modern warfare, and doubtless without any such enlargement of the figure, had in his mind those conflicts which, though men exerted themselves to the uttermost, were not finished. They had prepared themselves, they had put on their whole armor, they had exercised their utmost strength and courage, and

things had come simply to a point of standstill ; and the exhortation to them is, "Do not retreat, nor surrender, nor consent to fall, but stand ; and as before by activity, so now by patient waiting, win : win by working and waiting." This is the subject.

"Having done all."

A great many people forget that clause. They are willing to stand, before they have done anything—yea, to lie down. A great many persons are willing to stand, from indolence—from an indisposition to exert themselves ; but the command is, "*Having done all*, to stand." It is a command to men that love enterprise—that are active, either by nature or by grace ; to men of ambition, of compass, and of purpose ; to men that are ready to go into any amount of self-sacrifice, and the suffering that is incident to it : and to them, above all others, it is the hardest thing in the world to stand or to wait.

There is much misconception as to what are called labors, and burdens, and cross-bearings, and contentions. The easiest part of any life, whether it be secular or Christian, is its activity. As long as a man is in the possession of health, bodily activity is not toil. It may become so through excess ; but, by nature, a suitable degree of activity or industry does not simply accommodate itself to mankind,—it is in the constitution of men to be in health and in happiness by the exercise of their faculties.

And that which is true of the body is more eminently true of the mind : for our joys do not come few and large ; they come like the dew and like the profitable rain, in myriads of small drops ; and that which we enjoy most is that which we enjoy longest, and in small measure, at each particular moment of time. Activity, low in tension—intellectual activity, emotive activity, the whole man acting—this is the natural state of enjoyment ; and it is unnecessary to impress upon children, or upon Christian men, that Christian activity is something that we must take up, or that we shall be strengthened to take up. Why, we need grace to be lazy, if we are organized with good brains and large nervous systems. Under such circumstances, activity is

part and parcel of our enjoyment; and there is no real sentient and manly happiness without it.

All labors, therefore, that are normal, and that are carried on with moderation, and within proper limits, carry with them their own rewards. Every man who follows a useful occupation, and is not driven by stress of circumstances to untimely fatigue, ought to enjoy his work as he goes along. Every man in business ought to enjoy the business itself. This is the normal method of developing the whole man. Every scholar, every pupil, every professional man, should enjoy his work.

Hence, there are a great many persons who take credit to themselves for diligence when there is no credit due to them. There is a great deal of credit due to a child, if aloes are prescribed and he takes it without a wrinkle; but if grape-cure is prescribed, and large clusters of luscious Hamburgs are administered, with the injunction of the physician that a pound shall be eaten three times a day, and the child eats them with great docility and submission, and thinks, "What a good child I am!" is it goodness? Is it praiseworthy?

And so, many persons, because they do agreeable things, because they visit agreeable people, because they perform those offices of kindness which lie easily within their reach, costing them nothing, because they see the pleasure which arises from their ministrations, and because they fill up much of their lifetime in this way, say, "Am I not an active Christian? Am I not taking up my cross?" Why, when smiles are crosses, people like to take them up. When a harp is the cross, melodious to every touch, who would not be glad to bear it?

There are thousands of things which men are called to do in a Christian life that are so full of relations to pleasure, to peace, to self-respect, to the sense of praise, to social instincts, and to the feeling of sympathy, that they are not loth to take them up. They are not valueless, but they are not important; and no man can take to himself the repute of being a sufferer and a worker, in such a sense as to call for pity, who merely does those things in the work of God which are very agreeable.

What cross do you suppose *I* take up in preaching? Just the same kind of a cross a mountain rill takes up that gushes forth all summer long. Why does it gush forth? Because it is its duty? No; because it cannot help it. It is its nature; and it goes ringing down the dell to please itself, not to please the heavens, or the clouds, or anything else—though it may please them all. And it is because it is to me pleasanter than anything else that I preach. I might preach if it was not so pleasant; but I am entitled to no thanks because I preach. The whole professional life of a minister who has health, and a healthy theology, ought to be pleasant. Not that there are not some cares and perplexities connected with it; no machine was ever made in this world that had not friction somewhere; but there never was a machine made that ran with as little oil as a healthy man preaching to healthy men, or to men whom he can reach, the gospel of hope, of faith, and of love.

To this, many men are called; and they are told, when they enter upon the ministry, what a great and solemn work they have before them; what an awful responsibility they take upon them; how much they should abide in the closet; how they should ponder on what they are about to do. Well, I would not take away from any man that undertakes to be a minister of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus one whit of his sense of the necessity of moral earnestness, or of genuine sincerity; but I would tear away that fantastical notion, which belongs to ecclesiasticism and not to Christianity, that the work of Christ, in the ministry or out of the ministry, is a disagreeable work. It is honorable. It is full of joy. No other business is like it in the pay which it gives to you. Even if you are without friends, or if you labor on the borders of the wilderness, laying foundations, there rises up in your heart, if you are conscientiously doing God's work among the poor and the weak, the remunerations of the heroic element in the human soul. Whether in wealth or poverty, whether in popularity or unpopularity, there is, in the work of every honest man, doing a genuine service for God's people, a joy that is enough to compensate him if there were no other joy, no other honor, no

other remuneration. I would not call a man into the ministry simply because I thought he ought to go there; but if the interior life of the true minister of Christ could be opened up, vivid in contrast with the cares, the burdens, the disagreeable necessities, and the over-taxed efforts, which exist in other professions that are equally honorable in their place, in their way and in their methods, people would run eagerly to the Christian ministry. Not to an ecclesiastical ministry; not to sinecures—I am speaking, not of men who have an administration which requires them simply to turn the crank of pre-arranged affairs, routinists (although there must be some to serve machines, if machines are built): I am speaking of a manhood ministry—of a ministry of men who know Jesus Christ, and the love and power of God that are in him. I am speaking of those who love their fellow-men, and are willing to bring to them what medicine or what bread their disease or hunger needs. The ministry of such men, being neither mechanical nor perfunctory, but spontaneous and continual, and in full liberty and joy, is one of the most blessed avocations that the world knows; and activity, enterprise, incessant preaching or incessant visiting—these things are not to be set down to credit as virtues. They are gains.

Now, Paul had them; and he had them, too, under circumstances in which they were not all externally pleasant. I read a passage in your hearing, this morning, to show you that, notwithstanding the extraordinary incidents which befell his active ministry, it was joyful. I read it to show that the central idea of a Christian ministry in his hands was joy; and that all those superlative experiences which he had, but which were rarely ever experienced in the ministry of any other man, were converted into joys by the shining light of the interior central joy of the Lord Jesus Christ. And what to him were perils, or false brethren, or enemies, in the city or in the country, on the sea or on the land, but occasions for thanksgiving? For, as there are some ships that go plunging, plunging, plunging through the seas, so that every single wave splits and throws over, and their decks are never dry, while there are others that ride the waves, and are lifted by whatever strikes them, so there are some men who jam

themselves into every wave, and are forever full of tears, while others, with a higher Christian ideal, are buoyant in the midst of troubles, and ride over them, floating on the storm, and rejoicing.

Paul was one of the latter. He was the healthiest, the sweetest-souled, the most heroic, of all the men that are mentioned in the history of the Old or the New Testament. Now he was in prison; now he had no longer liberty to go where he would. The cries of the churches were brought over to him; but he was a man enchained—fastened to a soldier. He heard of their disagreements and conflicts, or of their welfare and rejoicings. He received tokens sent in to him of their good will and various experience. But it was when he was lying, ready to be offered, and conscious that his last hours were near to him—it was then, and as a part of his own experience, that he said to them, “Having done all that lies in activity and enterprise and forth-putting, why, do the rest, that consists in standing and waiting.”

There is a world of Christian life in simple patient waiting—in simple Christian endurance; and if I were to call your attention, with various enumeration, to those within the range of your own observation and knowledge; and if you were to go about and take an inventory of them, family by family, I think you would be surprised, and that the surprise would grow upon you, to see how large a number there are in every community who need, not the gospel of activity, but the gospel of patient waiting—who need to look upon their religious sphere, not as a sphere of enterprise and accomplishment, but simply as a sphere of endurance and conquering by standing.

It will be my purpose to give the largest scope to the subject, but only by specimens, showing the various classes who are called to stand—to be content, in other words, with a position which does not allow the active exertion of one's faculties.

First, there are a great many who are called, in the providence of God, to bear things which are irremediable for physical reasons. There are troubles that never get into the newspapers (and therefore they are peculiar!); as when one

is born with a mark upon the face, being otherwise comely. That mark is to be carried all through life. No surgeon's knife, nothing, can remove it. Wherever he goes, man, woman and child, looking upon him, look to pity. You that are comely; you that are plain; you that can pass, attracting only admiration, or attracting no notice (which is still better)—you know nothing of what it is to be obliged to say to yourself, at the beginning, "Well, I am to stand apart from all my fellows. I am a marked man. No person shall come near me, and not stop and look, and say, 'Who is that? What is that?'" All my life long, it is to be so."

Byron was born club-footed, or was early made so; and it wrought, through his whole life, upon his disposition. It made his pride bitter; it made him envious; it made him angry: but his bitterness, his envy, his anger did no good: he had to carry that querled ankle all his life long. It worked on him.

I know not how I should take it, now that I am old—they say; but I know that if, in the beginning, I had had that to deal with, it would have been no small matter. To be sure, if a man comes home from the war with only a shoulder, there is honor in that—such as it is. Everybody respects you, and permits you to go to poverty; and yet, there may be a sense of honor that will be some sort of equivalent even for this misfortune. But, to have it congenital; to have it a mere accident, without any patriotism; to be lopped of one leg or arm; to be scarred with loathsome small-pox; to be marked in any way that sets you aside from your fellows, and makes you a hermit in the world—an individual without cohesion in those respects which unite you to others,—this is a matter for which there is no remedy. What can you do? Nothing. Bear it—*bear it*. And you shall find how easy it is to bear it, because everybody will say to you, "My dear friend, you must be patient, and bear it." Then it is easy! How easy it is for us to bear each other's troubles! Parents bear their children's troubles so easily! Neighbors bear their neighbor's troubles, oh, how easily! And so, it is easy for us to say to a person who is set apart from his fellows by physical reasons,

“Well, you should be a man. You should bear it manfully.” And when every day of every week, of every month, of every year, has had its own special throws at a morbid disposition and a sensitive pride—how does anybody who has never had these things to bear, and never thought of them, know what it is to bear them? It seems easy to you who know nothing about them, but it is like a rankling thorn with a poisoned tip to those who are afflicted by them.

Nevertheless, here is a gospel for such—Stand! *Stand!* Why? Because it is the will of God.

If you were in an army, and were selected by your commanding officer, to be sent as a vidette or as a scout to worm and explore the distant thicket, being specially chosen on account of your bravery, you would take it as an honor. When, in the battle of Gettysburg, it was needful to clear out from the Devil’s Den the sharp-shooters who were making havoc among our officers, a printer, who I think is in New York somewhere now, was told by his general, who knew him to be bold, to pick some of his companions, and go and clear out that nest of sharpshooters. It was about as perilous a task as he could have undertaken; but it pleased him—and all the more because he did it; and now it is his modest joy occasionally to rehearse the service which he performed—the most dangerous, and the most likely to be rewarded with lead, of all.

And if such be the soldier’s thought in respect to a battle, what is your thought in respect to God? Is he your God? Are you Christ’s child? Has he marked you, so that every man shall see you? And is it not that every man who looks upon you, seeing that you have this great affliction which no striving against can remove, shall say, “Behold how he stands, Christ-like”? A Christian, under such circumstances, is more a Christian than if he were an active man. There are men in New York who do nothing, but who represent Christ more nearly than Harlan Page did, or than many missionaries do, or than many popular preachers do, who run with the current of their nature.

Look at another very large class of men—larger than that of which I have been speaking—who come into life, with a

laudable ambition, willing and meaning to spend and be spent for the good of their country, of their kind, of their age, and, it may be, of their God. It is for them through scholarship to acquit themselves, and with great attainments and constantly augmenting progress they are already noted, and their unfolding powers show them to be no insignificant heirs of the future; but some feebleness or gradual disease of the eye not only closes to them all books, but shuts out nature, and they grow blind. And now in the hour when the word is spoken, "You must content yourself, my young friend: no surgeon can help you; you are blind; you must be blind"—in that hour, what an instantaneous revolution there is of life! What a change there is in every expectation! What a waste! And yet, it is irremediable. And shall this man now go kicking against the pricks and repining? Shall he yield to despondency? This is a case where the gospel of standing comes in; and in all the plenitude of divine authority Christ says to every such one, "My son, I that wore the crown, and yielded life itself for thee, have need of some one in the very flush of youth and expectancy, to show the world how Christian character evolves under such circumstances. Having done all, having acquired the power to use your sight with great efficiency, now that it is gone from you, stand and be contented."

Sickness comes, in after life. Men enter upon their professions. The plow is put into the furrow, and the strong will, like well-broken oxen, draws their purpose bravely on; and, just as they have come to that opening where honor and universally acknowledged success is about to crown their legitimate endeavor, they break down in health. They become invalids. Voyages bring them nothing, and physicians from afar bring them nothing; and, year in, year out, till hope deferred makes the heart sick, they decline; and at last they sit down, valetudinarians, and drop all things and see the world go by. It is very easy to say it; but, to know what you have in you, and have no right to use it; to know what you could do, and long to do it, but to be shut up by sickness and see the honors that were just within your reach seized by other hands; to see the great life

thunder by, and be like one broken down in the army and thrown out of the march,—is that very easy? Yet there is not a village in the land in which there is not some ambitious youth called to just such an experience, who needs this gospel. Learn how, having done all, to stand still, and be patient, and wait to the end.

It is a noble thing for a man, with a chastened ambition, restrained within due bounds by a wise reason, to aspire to achievements; and, when the potency to achieve is demonstrated, it is still more heroic for such a man, if it be the will of God, to fold his wings and stand still, and let those achievements go by.

I wonder that some of the old music has been suffered to die out. I have always wondered why that song, “The Captive Knight,” should have gone into disuse. A returning crusader, in crossing a hostile territory, was seized by some nobleman, and thrown into a castle prison. After a time, on some bright morning, he hears the sound of distant music, which comes nearer and nearer; and soon the flash of the spears is seen; and by and by the banners appear; and at last he sees men approaching whom he recognizes as his old companions, with whom he has breasted the war in a thousand battles. As they draw still nearer and nearer, he can distinguish their countenances; and he calls out from his tower to them, again and again; but the music covers the sound of his voice, and they pass on and on, and finally the last one disappears, the banners gleam no more, and the music dies in his ear, and he is left alone to perish in his prison!

There are thousands of captive knights in this world who see their companions passing by with the glories and honors of life, while they are in prison and cannot stir; and to them comes the message of our text, “Having done all, stand.” Stand still, and be patient, and be as manly and as noble, in standing still, as you fain would have been in attainment and achievement.

We are constantly meeting men who are thrown out of their career in the midst of life, and all whose success is turned to misfortune. For myself, I have a peculiar sorrow

and sympathy for those who, having begun well, and having succeeded to a degree, are, by the various revulsions to which society, especially in our land, is subjected, turned out of their legitimate sphere of labor at a time and under circumstances in which they cannot recover themselves. I cannot sympathize with any of the stock remarks which are usually indulged in concerning such men. "Oh, he was always a schemer!" As if society would go forward at all, were there not some pioneers! "Oh, well, that is what you might have expected. He was a generous-hearted fellow; everybody could do just what he pleased with him; and of course you can imagine what his business would come to, under such circumstances." As much as to say that the fact that the man was too manly for his own good, was a reason why you should despise or pity him! Our thoroughfares are full of men who, if they should speak their silent thoughts, would say: "I remember, years ago, when there was not a man in these streets who did not seek to do me honor; but now, almost nobody seems to know me." They are men who once lived as you live, but who now live on the outskirts of the city, and in small houses where rents are less, and all whose households are put to ingenuity and labor, to eke out a poor subsistence.

When you think how many, by commercial revulsions and infelicities of business, have been stopped in mid-career, and forbidden to go forward, not only, but thrown back to the bottom, is it a matter of no sorrow? And yet, I think that, under such circumstances as these, some of the noblest manifestations of Christianity have been exhibited and beheld. Men have contentedly taken poverty and obscurity, that they might inherit themselves; and if they were to speak their innermost thoughts, what a revelation it would be! But these thoughts never come out in prayer-meetings. Christian brethren, I do not think we ever get the best things in our prayer-meetings. The soul carries its choicest treasures with a kind of fastidious delicacy; and men are accustomed to confess their sins in general, and to keep back their particular ones. They are accustomed to speak of their victories in general, and never to mention those victo-

ries which are the most significant in the sight of God. The history which lies inside of the soul, is a history which will never be read until it is read from God's book. The very soul of the soul, has never been spoken or printed. It is inarticulate, and is unknown to mankind. And there are many men who, lying low in human notice—failures, as the world looks upon them—are nevertheless the highest in the wisdom of God, having learned the gospel, first of activity, and then of passivity. Having done all, they have learned how to stand.

It is not always seemly to mention names, and yet I will not hesitate to say that when such a man as Le Grand Lockwood goes over, and everything is swept away, I cannot go by the stately house which he had built for himself and for his children, and look upon it, and say, "What a useless expense! He made a great show, but now where is he? What vanity he displayed! People that live fast are very likely to go over"—chattering, chattering, chattering such cheap moralities as men do. I think of no such thing. There is more history in that one man's feelings than in a whole hundred years of recorded history. There is more history in many a young man's thought at night, as God sees things, than in the pompous chronicles of France or England.

And there is that other man, whom now it is so easy and cheap to deride,—Jay Cooke,—of whom men say, "He was over-sanguine; his ventures were utterly wild," but who was a man that meant the best things, and whose ruin carries down thousands. How must he feel, standing now in the wilderness, solitary and alone? Thousands of men that once were glad to have his look and his recognition, now pass by him as an exploded experiment—a Chinese cracker that has been fired off.

For my part, I look upon such men with the profoundest sympathy, and long that they may have made known to them that gospel of patient waiting and heroic efflorescence in Christian quality which shall make them better than they have been at any other time of their life.

There is, also, a condition of things which is not often

recognized in the pulpit, but which life feels, and which men in life continually feel, where a man all his days is conscious of being what is called "a creature of circumstances"; where he is in a subordinate place, and subject to men who are in every way his inferiors. There is a natural law of rank and of value; and it is striving, all the time, against artificial arrangements. Wealth,—although it is subject to this great cerebral law, that price is according to the quality and quantity of brains that go to the making up of anything,—when once obtained, becomes itself no longer the exponent of the causes which produced it, and assumes a kind of legislative power. The father that earns, dies; and the son that spends, lives: and the latter, although he is without the qualities which made the property, or which adorned it, stands far above the multitudes who are, in every way—in thought, in enterprise, in fineness, in virtue, in manliness—his superiors; and under him they must walk, and to him they must be responsible;—and it is hard.

It would be hard if God should say to me, "Serve thou that monkey all the days of thy life." If I were sure that it was the will of God, I should try to do it, however much I might marvel; but would it be easy? Would it be easy to my self-respect, to my sense of the fitness of things, to my pride, to my imagination, all the time to dance attendance upon a monkey? There are thousands who do it in life. I have seen most noble and stately women allied to men who scarcely could be said to belong to the human species, so slender were their endowments—for the distance between, that the Darwinites speak of, is very much narrower in some places than in others. And yet, what honor there is! What fidelity! What brooding care under the form of reverence! What thinking for him, planning for him, willing for him, stopping faults, and holding back from ruin! Yet he, bantam-like, struts as though he were the master and lord of the household. But there is no remedy, for the fool's life is long. And in this ill-mated pair, how noble, how divine is that self-abnegation that covers from the eyes of men—nay, from their own eyes—the sense of unfitness that the stronger, the wiser and the better should serve the poor, pinched

homunculus ! But is it not better so ? Some, poisoned with the world's worst ambition, would say, "Break these bonds in sunder, and go careering through the wilderness for some fitter conjunction of circumstances" ; but wisdom is justified of her children, and one woman that stands in such a case patiently covering infirmity, hiding fault, and carrying her own great self, and her little self with her, to heaven, does more for religion, and for honor, and for ideal humanity, than a thousand trumpeting heroines.

How many are there that, as subordinates in the store, or upon the ship, or in the army, or in business, are unquestionably, by nature, chiefs ? Life, in its unmatched conditions and circumstances, is filled full of such instances : and while men may legitimately strive for a sphere which befits their faculties ; while it is right for them, by fulfilling the duties of the place where they are, to create a vacuum above them which shall draw them up into it (for the call of God comes to men not in themselves, but in those above them that need them) ; while it is right for men to rise, when the circumstances which surround them admit of it, yet, so long as in the providence of God they cannot, and are obliged to stand in a given relation to their fellow-men, without regard to their superiority in knowledge or moral worth, they need to apply to themselves this gospel of—having done all, to stand.

A rich man's librarian, who carries more knowledge in his little finger than the man in his whole body ; the staff-officer, who does the drudgery and planning, that his feeble general may reap the glory ; the confidential clerk, whose going out leaves the establishment to fall to ruin, showing what he has been to it ; all men who in the providence of God find themselves lower than their powers entitle them to be—there is a gospel to them of standing patiently, of waiting, and not calling God to account for his providence.

As in the outward, so in multitudes of the inward, relations of life. It is often the case that children are obliged to patiently wait for their parents. I do not mean that the father is a drunkard, and that the child waits long and patiently for him—though that is noble ; but the boys are all

gone, and the old Vermont farm is hard of soil and full of rocks ; and the youngest son at home is evidently a child of genius, more than any of them. One has grown rich in Illinois ; another rules in a county in Missouri ; another has gone to India, and is reaping a fortune there ; and the last son, although in him are the movements of genius, says, " I cannot leave the old people. My father and mother have no one else to lean on." And so, without words, without inscription, in the silence of his own heroic soul, he says, " I will stand here. Whatever is in me that I can use here, I will use for my father's sake, and for my mother's sake."

Many a maiden has consented to pass on to that ground where the disparaging term " old maid " is attached to her, from reasons as pure, as self-sacrificing, as heroic, as ever animated human nature. " I will not leave my home, my mother, and my younger sisters ; I will not leave them, and I cannot take them. No man can take them all." And she devotes herself to virginity ; and no saint in the catholic register—a long register of noble souls—shall shine brighter in the thought of God than the son or the daughter that, without boasting or publicity, for the sake of the father and mother, contents himself or herself with an undisclosed and undeveloped life.

How parents wait for children, is more generally known ; and yet, no rule was ever framed, and no estimate was ever made, that told the half of that heroic endurance which fathers and mothers pass through for the sake of erring and shipwrecked children. Oh, that it only might be true that they always at last came back ! The bitterest part of this bitterest experience of human life is when score of years is added to score of years, and all calls have not brought back the wandering prodigal, and the drama closes with his final and utter destruction. There is a mystery about this ; and yet, how many silent waiters there are ! How many there are that have cried in the closet, night and day, " How long ? O Lord, how long ? " And yet there came no cheer, and no command except, " Having done all, stand," and they stand till God calls them.

What, then, are those considerations or motives that help

us to do these things which are so hard in the service of the Lord Jesus Christ? We are his servants, not by a profession, but because we do and bear and suffer as he did that bore and suffered. Listen then :—

“Be obedient.”

To whom was this said? To slaves, the most accursed class of men on earth; subordinated, made the mere pleasure of their masters, denied at every single outlet the full expression of growing manhood. And yet, to them it is written!

“Be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh [not that they were their masters: Paul is very careful of ever acknowledging that doctrine] with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eye service as men pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.”

Whatsoever you do, do it heartily. Be glorious men, if you *are* slaves. But what is the motive? Says the servant, “My master will not understand it. It will not put me forward in the world. Whatever I gain, he will reap.” But the apostle says that you are servants of God.

“With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, he shall receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.”

Take the fullness of that thought of God with you, that you are consecrated to the Lord Jesus Christ, following in his providence, following in his personal knowledge of and love for yourself, believing that from your childhood you have been an object of the paternal thought and care of Christ, in comparison with which ordinary parental care is poor and pale. Look upon your condition as the allotment of Divine Providence. Even if your faults put you in the place where you are, it is a providence. If your sins put you there, it is still a permissive providence. And wherever you are, whether by mistake or wrong doing or sickness, there standing, you are not shut out from God. You are his, and his word to you is, “There, in your circumstances, serve and obey me, and you shall receive a reward and an inheritance.”

What, then, is that reward and inheritance? The apostle says of Christ, “When he shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.” I do not think it signifies simply an external coming together; I think the idea

lies far deeper than that, though that also is carried with it. Here, Christ is not apparent to us. We know him only by hints, signs, or symbols. But when the day shall come that we shall rise with spiritual vision, cleansed, Jesus Christ shall be disclosed, opened up, so that all the created universe shall perceive him as he is, with glory infinite, far beyond expression or conception. Now, when he shall be unfolded, and shall pour himself abroad in infinite glory, you that are here wrapped up, undeveloped buds, germinal, shall be opened up and disclosed ; and when he shall be as glorious as his nature is, then you shall come to that glory which is possible to your nature. You serve the Lord Christ for a little time, and rapidly you are being borne on to the sphere and plane of disclosure ; and then, when death shall take down from before you all this opacity, when these eyes shall fail that others may open, and you shall behold with amazement and rapture the wonderful reality of Christ, in turn you will find yourselves so changed, so radiant, so noble, that it will be the first time in all your history in which you shall have known yourselves. Then will appear the meaning of all the blows, of all the pruning cuts, and all the experiences of joy and sorrow through which you have passed.

The old lapidary, purblind, sits in his Amsterdam shop, and to him is brought some Kohinoor, some great rough diamond, and he takes it in his hand, and studies it, turning it in every way, and lays out a plan by which, instead of being a lusterless stone, it shall be cut, and made brilliant, and set. And the plan being fixed upon, forthwith, with many wheels, and with diamond dust, he works by day and by night, rubbing it with oil and emery, and works through the patient months, until at length the last facet is ground. And now he cleanses it ; and, taking it to the light for the first time, he holds it up, and the sun flashes from a hundred faces such a beauty as men never saw in it before. The stone did not know what ailed it, nor what he was doing with it, as, sitting in his old shop, he ground it, working day and night, turning first one side to the wheel, and then another and then another ; and it did not feel any more glorious than at the beginning until the grinding was done, and the cleans-

ing was done, and it was brought out into the sunlight ; but then it flashed glory from all its faces. And when this great round wheel of time, grinding by joy and sorrow, has completed its work, and we are taken at last into the presence of the Sun of Righteousness, and are held up, then shall flash from every side of us such glory and such beauty as it never entered into the heart of man to conceive.

You are not born for time. Made out of the dust, you do not belong to the dust. Begun, you shall never end. God has great things for you, and all he asks is that, in the school where he is teaching you, you will be patient, believe in him, hope on, and be trustful ; that, by-and-by, when the work is complete, he may show you what you are, and what is the meaning of his providence. And when he is to you the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely, in the joy on his face you shall see how sweet and beautiful to him you are.

In the hope of this termination, in the faith of this consummation, in the joy of anticipation, learn not only how to do all, but how, when God's providence shall bring the other part upon you, to stand and wait.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

BLESSED be thy name, O thou Most High, for thine infinite condescension; for thy power which is exerted upon all thy creatures, and by which thou art drawing toward thyself thy whole creation. With slow but sure degree, thou art drawing up those made in thine own image to a perfect likeness. What it is to be the sons of God we know not. Intimations thou dost please to give us, but the fullness, the glory, the wonder is hidden; nor are we prepared to understand thee: yet it cheers us to know that it is above all earthly glory; that there is nothing in friendship, nothing in occupation, nothing in life, nothing in power, or wisdom, or wealth, or glory of outward estate, to which it can be likened; that it rises above all the infirmity of the best things, and stands beyond us because it transcends the measure of our mind and of our experience. And out of this faith and hope of things beyond we draw continual nourishment, and learn to carry ourselves in the spirit of love and universal benefaction. Since faith and hope and love endure forever, we desire to walk in an eternity thereof, and by hope and faith to draw down upon us such divine influences as shall enable us to bear all things, to be patient with all things, to be kind toward all, to be full of benevolence toward all, to love all, and so to be like thee.

Vouchsafe to every one in thy presence now, that divine grace and helpfulness which every one needs in the battle of his own soul, or in the way or warfare of his own life. We are all of us called to contention. Each bears his own burden. Thou hast appointed the cross for every one who is to wear the crown. If we are without chastisement, we are not children. Grant to every one that patience, yea, that glorying which thou dost permit to the soul in trouble and infirmity. Grant that sorrow and pain, in the light of thy suffering and of thy victory, may change their color and their meaning. May we not be as other men, who walk oppressed by outward dominations; who seek life only in the world, subject to those storms and whirls which belong to this lower atmosphere. May we count ourselves born of God, and heirs of an estate which no earthly storm can reach. There may our life be hid where Christ is. May we set our affections on things above—not on things upon the earth. So may we be established in the faith of the great unseen world, of the presence of God, and of the reality of the invisible, so that we may walk among men rejoicing, strangely knowing all, and yet unknown; dying, and yet living; poor, and yet inheriting all things; afflicted, and yet triumphant; in despair and despondency as other men look upon us, and yet crowned and rejoicing as thou dost behold us.

Give to us this secret life that shall lift us above the other life, and make us conquerors, and more than conquerors, through Him who loved us. And as our strength is in thee, so may we recognize it. Day by day, may it be our joy that it is Christ in us that throbs with desire, that aspires, that strives. May we feel how helpless is

this mortal flesh, and how dull and pulseless is ambition for spiritual things in this lower life. May we rejoice that there is a Divine Spirit stirring within us, and making out of the dull realities of the best things in this life an aspiration for things nobler and diviner. And may we follow the things of God. May we behold, in all the events of our lives—in their outward ordering and inward experience—the hand of love, the hand of wisdom and power, the hand of God.

Vouchsafe to every one, to each according to his several circumstance, thy special help in his special need. We pray for those that are in sorrow, and for those that are in joy; for those that are cast down, and for those that are exalted; for those whose cup runs over, and for those who are in a barren land, weary and thirsty. We pray for all whom thou hast blessed in the household, and to whom the family is as the gate of heaven; and for all that sit in the region and shadow of death, beholding their household broken and destroyed. We pray for all those who are walking in the light, and for all those who are walking in darkness. May they see thy light in the day and in the night. We pray that thy blessings may rest abundantly upon each as thou seest that he needs.

Bless the services of the day, not only in our own place, but in every place where thy people are gathered together. May the name of Jesus be sweet to every soul. May the power of Christ be upon those who minister in sacred things. Give light and encouragement to thy servants; and, as they sow often in tears, yet more abundantly may they reap with joy. Spread abroad the truth as it is in Christ throughout all the world. May darkness and ignorance, may passions and all brute forces, cease. Bring in, we pray thee, that latter-day glory, when all the earth shall learn to love peace founded upon justice and upon knowledge.

And to thy name, Father, Son and Spirit, shall be praises everlasting. *Amen.*



PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

OUR Father, we pray for thy discouraged ones; for thy hidden ones; for thy suffering ones; for thy poor and despoiled ones. We pray for all those who have none but thee for an advocate, and who are near to thy heart. Breathe peace into their souls. Give them faith of the future, and a hope that shall triumph over sight. And we pray that, in all the experiences of our own lives, going through light and through darkness, through joy and through sorrow, through weakness and through strength, we may still have this sure, *sure* faith that God is doing all things right, and that all things shall work together for good to them that love thee. And at last bring us to that rest which remaineth for the people of God.

We ask for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

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
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